



On The CIA and Related Agencies

list + index - 1/12
copies

INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY REMAINS A PROBLEM FOR CONGRESS

The Nov. 1-2 coup in Viet Nam, which deposed the regime of President Ngo Dinh Diem after nine years' rule, resulted in part at least from the U.S. Government's dissatisfaction with the Diem regime and its encouragement of reform in Viet Nam. The event focused attention on the possibility of more direct American intervention to effect the coup, and concern inevitably centered on the role of the Central Intelligence Agency.

The CIA is the fact and symbol of a postwar development in the nation which runs contrary to U.S. traditions of open diplomacy and non-intervention -- the practice of espionage and subversion to further national aims and protect national security. Actually, while the CIA has its spies and agents, much of its work of intelligence involves routine gathering and analysis of statistical, political and other data.

Criticism of CIA and other intelligence operations in the Government stems from revulsion against the cloak-and-dagger image, as well as annoyance at the intense secrecy which surrounds the intelligence community. Some fear the tradition of Democratic control of the Government, especially the military, may be undermined by the growth of para-military organs insulated from the public.

In addition, the very term "intelligence," while it attracts eager and able college graduates, implies mental faculties in the participants which critics say are not necessarily present.

Congress is particularly wary of the secrecy which covers the estimated \$1 billion-a-year operations of the CIA and other intelligence agencies in the Government. Indeed, Congress, jealous of its role as keeper of the purse strings, rankles at not even knowing how much and where the money goes for intelligence operations. Furthermore, the Congressional role of "oversight" is frustrated when it comes to supervision of the far-flung CIA operations, which probably involve between 15,000 and 20,000 employees in the U.S. and abroad.

Funds for CIA are hidden in annual appropriations for other agencies. Congress exercises only limited supervision through subcommittees of the Armed Services and Appropriations Committees.

Every year for the last ten, proposals have been made in Congress for some form of "Joint Committee on Foreign Intelligence" to give Congressional surveillance over the intelligence community in much the same manner as the Joint Atomic Energy Committee surveys the Atomic Energy Commission's activities and other nuclear affairs.

The idea of a Joint Committee on Foreign Intelligence has little chance of fulfillment in the near future, mainly because of the powerful forces in opposition to it. These are led by the President and his Administration, including the CIA, and importantly backed by the three committees in Congress which presently handle CIA matters or money -- the six-man Senate subcommittee made up of members of the Senate Armed Services and Appropriations Committees, the House Armed Services

Central Intelligence Agency Subcommittee and the House Appropriations Subcommittee on funds for intelligence activities (which itself is secret as to number and identity of members). Members of these subcommittees claim that they already provide the necessary Congressional surveillance of the intelligence community and that a joint committee for that purpose is unnecessary.

Background

The secretive, conspiratorial and subversive nature of the Communist threat to Western security led to a major expansion of U.S. intelligence operations in the postwar era. Agencies responsible for ferreting out accurate information on Communist intentions and capabilities -- and for thwarting enemy agents -- included the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the military intelligence services of the armed forces, the Department of State, the Atomic Energy Commission, the National Security Agency and the Central Intelligence Agency. Collectively, their intelligence operations -- almost totally clothed in secrecy -- cost more than \$1 billion annually, according to informed estimates.

At the center of this intelligence community is the CIA, created by the National Security Act of 1947. It is the successor of the National Intelligence Authority, established by President Truman in 1946. Responsible to the National Security Council, CIA was given broad authority to coordinate the intelligence output of the Government and to engage in undercover operations like those of the wartime Office of Strategic Services. In 1949, Congress gave complete discretionary power over CIA personnel and funds to the Director of Central Intelligence -- a post occupied successively by Rear Admiral Roscoe H. Hillenkoetter (1947-50), Gen. Walter Bedell Smith (1950-53), Allen W. Dulles (1953-61), and John A. McCone (1961-).

Little concerning CIA operations, whether successful or not, ever came to public attention. The agency was blamed in some quarters for the failure to give advance warning of the attack on South Korea in 1950 or of Chinese intervention that fall. Later CIA was credited with a hand in supplying Chinese Nationalist troops in Burma in 1950-54; in bringing down Iran's Premier Mossadegh in 1953 and the Arbenz regime in Guatemala in 1954; and in supporting the right-wing Noravan regime in Laos in 1960. CIA's most spectacular success came to light as the result of a sensational failure: the shooting down of Francis Gary Powers in mid-Russia in May 1960 apparently put an end to four years of aerial reconnaissance over the U.S.S.R. by high-flying U-2s. CIA's most publicized failure came in April 1961 when Fidel Castro crushed an Agency-organized invasion of Cuba by rebel forces at the Bay of Pigs.

The CIA role in Viet Nam, at first in support of the Diem regime, was emphasized Oct. 4 with the recall of the CIA chief there, John H. Richardson, reportedly at

The CIA and Related Agencies - 6

has explored with the Subcommittee the most sensitive of Agency operations in order that the members be fully informed.

At times I, as a member, am concerned with the sensitivity of this information and its serious nature for fear that I might inadvertently endanger someone's life or a highly successful operation....

As to the CIA conducting independent operation in pursuance of its own policy, the Subcommittee has examined very closely the machinery by which the Agency is in fact responsible to the policy-makers. Under the existing procedural machinery, the Agency simply cannot operate independently nor does it in fact operate as a policymaking organ of the Government. The Director is directly responsible to the President....

REP. CHET HOLIFIELD (D CALIF.). I am glad the gentleman brought this point out because, as a member of the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy, we have had close relationships with the CIA. We know what the gentleman from South Carolina says is true, that there are people who have served in this organization who are in jail and some have lost their lives. Furthermore, they are also in a situation where they cannot be protected or they cannot be claimed as a member of the CIA in the event they are captured and jailed in a foreign country.

RIVERS. If I should tell you how many of these agents we have or if I should give you some sort of a number of the agents that we have, the Soviets could merely by a matter of arithmetic figure them out and ferret them out.

For instance, when the Director decides to separate a man he cannot go into court with his case under this bill, because if he did, any espionage person could figure out exactly who these people are, how many they are, and what they do. We cannot permit this. This espionage business is a dangerous business; it is not one that I would be in. We have never been in it before.... We must have this agency and we must give them this benefit.

REP. PAUL C. JONES (D MO.). I appreciate the fact that this whole Agency has to operate under an aura of secrecy.

RIVERS. Why, certainly.

JONES. And sometimes they are inclined to carry it to the ridiculous.... At the time of the U-2 incident...I made an appointment with Mr. (Allen) Dulles (former CIA Director) to talk to him about this thing. He tried to explain it to me, but I did not get much information. In his old headquarters they had a picture of the new CIA building. Just out of idle curiosity more than anything else, I said, "Mr. Dulles, how many people will be employed in this new building?" He said, "Oh, we cannot tell you that. That is secret." To me that was an asinine reply to a question, because I think anyone knows that there was no secrecy with regard to the number of people to be employed in that new building out at the Central Intelligence Agency, because anybody who knows anything about trying to estimate the number of employees in a building could have gotten it very well; or for that matter one could count the employees entering and leaving by public highway.

The thing that disturbs me about this bill is the fact that it has been the practice throughout many years for these people to take advantage of their sensitive position and to use it for privileged treatment which is not justified....

I do not think you have given us enough information about these people at the lower levels (CIA employees), who constitute a great majority. I would want some assurance that those people are not going to get further preferred treatment under this bill. I would like to have the gentleman comment on that.

RIVERS. The gentleman has made a pretty good speech. I do not know where to start to answer his question. I allowed him to talk for five minutes. What question does he want me to answer?

JONES. I asked the gentleman first if he knew of the differential in salary between the people employed doing clerical, filing, and typing work, who were getting paid more than those people in the departments?

RIVERS. I do not know that.

JONES. I think the gentleman should know it. I think his committee should know it. I think the House is entitled to that information.

RIVERS. The bill clearly points out who would be covered. JONES. I respectfully point out that it does not.

RIVERS. I must be stupid, because I have tried to explain that to the gentleman.

JONES. I do not think the gentleman is stupid. I think sometimes that Committee is overawed by the great secrecy under which

this Agency operates and some of the people have taken advantage of their position to keep secret some things that the Congress and the gentleman's Committee particularly are entitled to know.

REP. CLARK MACGREGOR (R MINN.). I was particularly pleased by the comments of the gentleman from South Carolina (Rivers) with respect to the nature of his Committee's knowledge of the work of the (CIA). This is particularly so because from time to time over the past three years we have heard complaints in this body and in the other body about the need for the establishment of a watchdog committee which, in my opinion, is not indicated from my knowledge of the existing committees of the Congress....

I should like to ask the gentleman...whether he agrees that the Committee on which the gentleman serves and other committees mentioned by the President (Kennedy) do maintain effective liaison over the work of the Central Intelligence Agency?

RIVERS. We do it all the time. The gentleman from Georgia (Vinson) is chairman of that subcommittee and its members meet all the time. We get all the information they have. We get a briefing on the world situation. They are totally frank. They present some very, very brilliant information before our subcommittee. They know how to figure out intelligence. It is quite an impressive thing.

JONES. I want to know if the gentleman thinks that this was justified as a matter of secrecy as to the number of employees that are working in this CIA building here in Washington?

RIVERS. I think so.

REP. CHARLES E. BENNETT (D FLA.). ...I would like to say there have been from time to time in the press and among individual Members of the House and others comments with regard to the necessity or the validity of adding another CIA committee. I think this is primarily because most Members of the Congress, or at least most members of the press and the public generally do not realize there are committees of this type in the House and Senate at the present time. So I would think, if questions are in the minds of Members of Congress, it might be an appropriate thing for these Members of Congress to treat the Committee on Armed Services and its CIA subcommittee just as they treat every other committee of the Congress and address to them the questions they have with regard to employment policies and with regard to any other policies they may have, and in this way perhaps some of this unnecessary secrecy can be removed. There is a degree of secrecy necessary in the CIA, but there is also a large area where there is no real necessity for secrecy.

REP. LESLIE C. ARENDS (R ILL.). Mr. Chairman, our Committee on Armed Services has had a Subcommittee on the (CIA) for many years. As a member of that subcommittee since its inception I have become somewhat familiar with the nature of the Agency's organization and its manifold activities. Our subcommittee has regularly inquired into the CIA's operation and from time to time have made specific inquiry into some specific aspect of its activities. Whenever a question would arise as to what the CIA had been doing in some particular area, our subcommittee would quietly but thoroughly look into it.

Naturally, all our subcommittee inquiries, investigations, and briefings were in executive session. Naturally, no reports have been issued as to our findings and recommendations. To do so would destroy the effectiveness of the Agency, and the importance of this Agency's work to our country's security cannot be too strongly emphasized....

For my part, I believe that in the CIA we have one of the finest intelligence agencies in the world....

There is one thing more I should like to emphasize with respect to the CIA. Contrary to what we read and hear from time to time, the CIA does not pursue an independent foreign policy. The Agency does not make policy. It simply gathers the facts upon which policy may be based. It simply carries out orders dictated by those who make policy.

GROSS. Mr. Chairman, if I may have the attention of the gentleman from Illinois (Arends), I would like to compliment the House Armed Services Committee on being able to get any and every type of information which they wanted from the Central Intelligence Agency. That has not been the experience of some other committees of Congress.

Mr. Chairman, I would have appreciated it had the gentleman went on today and told us who in the Cuban Bay of Pigs fiasco fell flat on their collective or individual faces.